

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA**

HUNTINGTON DIVISION

ANGEL MARIE LUCAS, et. al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Case No. 3:14-cv-29289

FAYE ALLEN, et. al.,

Defendants.

**MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER SEALING DOCUMENTS IN
SUPPORT OF COMPLAINT**

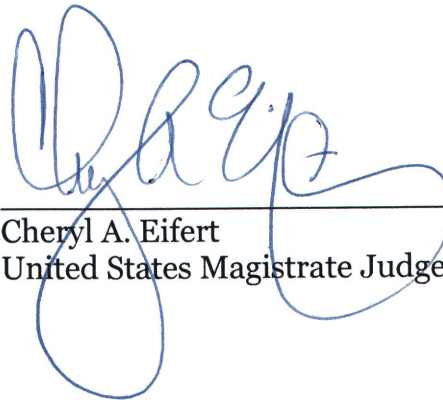
Plaintiff has filed additional documentation in support of her Complaint in the instant matter. (ECF No. 15). The supporting documentation includes documents for which privacy protection redactions should have been made, but were not made as required by Fed.R.Civ.P 5.2 and the Local Rules of this District. Due to the highly confidential nature of the information contained in the documents, this Court **ORDERS** the documents to be sealed.

The undersigned is cognizant of the well-established Fourth Circuit precedent recognizing a presumption in favor of public access to judicial records. *Ashcraft v. Conoco, Inc.*, 218 F.3d 288 (4th Cir. 2000). As stated in *Ashcraft*, before sealing a document, the Court must follow a three step process: (1) provide public notice of the request to seal; (2) consider less drastic alternatives to sealing the document; and (3) provide specific reasons and factual findings supporting its decision to seal the documents and for rejecting alternatives. *Id.* at 302. In this case, the documents shall be sealed and will be designated as sealed on the Court's docket. The Court deems this

sufficient notice to interested members of the public. The Court has considered less drastic alternatives to sealing the documents but in view of the highly confidential and specially protected nature of the records, as well as the extent of the private information contained therein, no such alternatives are feasible at this time. Moreover, the documents pertain to highly personal matters which have no particular relevance to the general public, or to the resolution of the pending legal matter. Accordingly, the Court finds that sealing the documents does not unduly or significantly prejudice the public's right to access court records.

The Clerk is instructed to provide a copy of this Order to the Plaintiff.

ENTERED: March 12, 2015



Cheryl A. Eifert
United States Magistrate Judge